

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-22, 34-80, and 86-90 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please add new claims 125-126.

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23. (original) A mask for delivering breathable gas to a patient, comprising:
a mask shell having a portion adapted to receive a supply of pressurized breathable gas and a user side;
a gusset portion having a first side attached to the user side of the shell and having a second side;
a cushion having a first portion constructed and arranged to attach to the second side of the gusset portion and a second portion constructed and arranged to contact a user's face in use and provide a seal between the mask and the user's face; and
a headgear constructed and arranged to attach the mask shell to the user;
wherein, the gusset portion is constructed and arranged such that it can expand and contract within a range of displacement to alter a distance between the mask shell and the cushion, the gusset portion defining a gusset area exposed to the supply of pressurized breathable gas in use such that the supply of pressurized breathable gas acting on the gusset area provides a component of a contact force F_c of the cushion on the user's face, the force F_c being maintained in approximately constant proportion to the supply of pressurized breathable gas and a total force of the mask on the face F_m being maintained within a range of about 35 - 108 grams per gf/cm^2 pressure of the supply of pressurized breathable gas over an operating pressure range of the mask.

24. (original) A mask for delivering breathable gas to a patient as in claim 23, wherein the force F_m is maintained within a range of about 40 – 88 grams per gf/cm^2 pressure of the supply of pressurized breathable gas.

25. (original) A mask for delivering breathable gas to a patient as in claim 24, wherein the force F_m is maintained within a range of about 50 – 88 grams per gf/cm^2 pressure of the supply of pressurized breathable gas.

26. (original) A mask for delivering breathable gas to a patient as in claim 25, wherein the operating pressure range is about 4-25 gf/cm^2 .

27. (original) A mask for delivering breathable gas to a patient as in claim 26, wherein the expansion and contraction of the gusset portion permits a seal to be maintained between the cushion and the user's face within a range of about plus and minus 8 degrees angular displacement of the mask shell with respect to the user's face.

28. (original) A breathable gas mask arrangement as in claim 23, wherein the gusset portion includes a single gusset having a flexible sidewall with a generally triangular cross-section when not exposed to the supply of pressurized breathable gas that balloons to a generally rounded cross-section when exposed to the supply of pressurized breathable gas.

29. (original) A breathable gas mask arrangement as in claim 23, wherein the gusset portion includes a sidewall having a thickened cross-section at a base of the sidewall.

30. (original) A breathable gas mask arrangement as in claim 29, wherein the thickened portion has a generally uniform thickness.

31. (original) A breathable gas mask arrangement as in claim 29, wherein the gusset portion includes a sidewall having a cross-sectional thickness tapering from a thickened base portion to a thinner portion.

32. (original) A breathable gas mask arrangement as in claim 23, and further including a generally rigid backstop attached to the mask shell for contacting a first sidewall portion of the gusset portion to limit movement of the first sidewall portion.

33. (original) A breathable gas mask arrangement as in claim 32, wherein the generally rigid backstop extends around substantially an entire periphery of the gusset portion.

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125. (new) A mask for delivering breathable gas to a patient as in claim 23, wherein the mask is a nasal mask.

126. (new) A mask for delivering breathable gas to a patient as in claim 23, wherein the mask is a CPAP mask.